7:Bolinder T-5 (1920, 1955) 1957
SC13 Goajiro SC13

881 584 invitation. Again cattle are butchered, and there is drinking and dancing and horse-racing. Numbers of men come to see if they would like to put themselves forward as suitors. The more eminent guests are received in the house itself, and the girl is now present. Her shorn hair has grown and been trimmed to a page-boy cut, and she wears her best clothes and new ornaments. She hides her hair clippings carefully in a bag, for she does not want to risk anyone getting hold of them and using them to acquire power over her by the arts of magic. Later, she will secretly bury them under a cow pat. That will help to increase her herds. The droppings of various animals play a great part in the magic of the Guajiro, and it would seem that there is negro influence here as well.

[754 826] [789 514]

881 The girl has now been born again—she is a new person, a woman. She knows all that an adult woman needs to know and can do everything that a wife and mother should be able to do. Pale and lovely, she steps out into life once more and inquisitive young men swarm round her. The rich give a big feast, the poor provide simpler fare, but it is always a great occasion.

[582] A Guajiro man will never marry a girl before she has undergone this period of confinement, which means that people seldom marry too early. It is said that in the old days rich old men with several wives sometimes bought little poor girls as concubines, believing that that would enhance their virility.

[595 831]

The girl's long segregation is intended to protect her from the supernatural dangers that are thought to threaten her, especially during this sensitive period of transition from childhood to womanhood. The girl can also be dangerous to others through being exposed to attack by spirits. It is only practical that during this period she should practise handicrafts.

262 [354] Going back to the house, we found the women at the fires, which there were protected by special small cactus screens. There was no need to have them under a roof at that time of the year, only to shelter them from the wind. The pots stood over the fire supported on three stones.